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**Environment Department, Burlington Resources Partner to Improve Air in
Northwestern New Mexico**

(Santa Fe, NM) – The New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) recently announced that Burlington Resources, San Juan Division has agreed to become the first participant in the Department's San Juan Voluntary Innovative Strategies for Today's Air Standards (VISTAS) program. This voluntary emission control program is designed to improve air quality in northwestern New Mexico, especially to reduce ozone air pollution.

Ground level ozone is an air pollutant that can affect human health and is a major component of urban smog. Ground-level ozone-forming emissions include nitrogen oxides and volatile organic compounds, pollutants that are emitted from a variety of sources. In recent years, air quality monitors operated by NMED in San Juan County have recorded ground-level ozone concentrations that approach the federal Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) national health-based standard for ozone.

"Exceeding these standards will trigger federal requirements that could be very onerous for local businesses," said NMED Secretary Ron Curry. "By participating in this voluntary program, companies like Burlington Resources are helping to keep the air clean in northwestern New Mexico."

San Juan VISTAS recognizes companies for voluntarily implementing technologies and practices to reduce emissions that contribute to the formation of ground-level ozone. San Juan VISTAS is now open to industries, municipalities, and other organizations in San Juan, Rio Arriba, and Sandoval Counties.

"Burlington Resources is pleased to partner with the NMED and the San Juan VISTAS program," states Richard Fraley, Vice President of the San Juan Division, Burlington Resources. "While there are currently no imminent air quality problems in the San Juan Basin, we believe that it makes sense for industries such as ours to look at proactive means to improve our environmental practices."

In order to qualify for the program companies must institute emissions reductions that are above and beyond state and federal air quality requirements. Partners need to prepare and sign a Voluntary Agreement, which is available at the program website. Companies that participate in the program are further recognized by NMED as Clean Air Partners.

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San Juan VISTAS is a result of the San Juan County Early Action Compact for ozone, which included a scientific study of the causes of increased ground-level ozone in northwestern New Mexico. If successful, San Juan VISTAS may be expanded in scope and/or made available to companies and facilities in other locations in New Mexico.

For more information about San Juan VISTAS, visit the program website at:

<http://www.nmenv.state.nm.us/aqb/projects/SJV> or contact Andy Berger, Environmental Analyst, NMED Air Quality Bureau at (505) 955-8034, or Jon Goldstein, Communications Director, NMED at (505) 827-0314.

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